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ABSTRACT

This report is the fifth review of the accomplishments of Washington's 32 two-year colleges under the provisions of the Worker Retraining program. The Worker Retraining program assures that jobless workers have immediate access to job retraining for a new career if they are not able to find work in their current field. It also builds the capacity of colleges to provide training in high-demand, high-wage fields. The program has served 33,387 unemployed and dislocated workers between 1993 and 1998 at the public colleges and 1,012 at 35 private career schools. Three major findings are reported: (1) the program is changing to reflect the changing face of job loss in Washington, that is, dislocated workers are less likely to come from manufacturing and more likely to be in service and retail trades; (2) workers who participate in programs are finding good jobs at high salary levels; 83% of those who left the college have gained employment, with an average salary of $10.83 per hour in 1997; and (3) colleges are providing training that is responsive to the growing need for technology workers, especially for smaller firms, where most of today's economic growth is found. Additional information is provided on the participants and recipients. Contains 14 tables. (AS)

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ED 430 633

Worker Retraining

Fifth Accountability Report for Worker Retraining Programs (Formerly HB 1988)

December 1998

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Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

December 1998

Background: Since 1993, Washington state has provided special funding for retraining efforts on behalf of the thousands of jobless workers who are forced to change careers in order to re-enter the workforce due to changes in the economy.

In 1997-98 the program provided funds to the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) for an additional 5,930 "slots" (full-time equivalent students) in the community and technical college system, financial assistance for some of the dislocated workers while in training, and 270 "slots" in private career schools. The program has served 33,387 unemployed and dislocated workers between 1993 and 1998 at the public colleges and 1,012 at 35 private career schools.

The Worker Retraining program assures that jobless workers have immediate access to job retraining for a new career if they are not able to find work in their current field. It also builds the capacity of colleges to provide training in high demand, high wage fields. Unemployed workers are required to pay tuition just like other community and technical college students. Nearly half the students receive a small amount of financial assistance to cover tuition or other related costs.

This report, prepared by the SBCTC, is the **fifth review** of the accomplishments of Washington's 32 two-year colleges under the provisions of the program. It provides detailed information about the program results. Copies of the first four reports are available in the publication section of the SBCTC web site at www.sbctc.ctc.edu.

This report is based on data from two main sources: 1) college enrollment records, and 2) unemployment insurance system data, which provides data on the results of the program.

Findings: The program is changing to reflect the changing face of job loss in the state

- Dislocated workers are coming mostly from service and retail trades rather than from manufacturing as they did when the program first began.
- The year to year shifts in the number of new students by region of the state enrolling in the Worker Retraining program reflect the shift in the pattern of dislocation. New student numbers where very high in the Puget Sound region when the program first started. This year, growth in the number of new students was limited to timber impacted eastern Washington, a region that accounted for two percent of the new students.

Findings: Workers who participate in programs are finding good jobs at high salary levels.

- Colleges have provided training that returned 17,400 workers to jobs after their job loss. Some 83 percent of all those who left the college have gained employment.
- Those leaving the college at the end of 1996-97 gained employment at $10.83 an hour.

- Seven to nine months after training, 83 percent of all worker retraining students were re-employed. This rate is higher than the nation wide rate of 79 percent employment for adults with some college training.
- At seven to nine months after training, those employed earned 96 percent of their former wage rate.
- Job retention a year after initial placement is 87 percent, a very high rate for dislocated workers.

Findings: Colleges are providing training that is responsive to the growing need for technology workers.

- This past year, 745 students moved from the information systems programs to the job market compared to just 145 students during the first year of the Worker Retraining program. This is the fastest growing program area for worker retraining students. The typical student from the information system program earns $12.07 an hour immediately after college.
- Training provided workers for twice as many small firms (more than 2,000) as large firms (just under 1,000) in 1997. Much of the economic growth today is in small firms employing 100 workers or less.

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PARTICIPANTS

The Washington state economy is marked by two contradictory characteristics: a resilient economy which is continually creating new jobs at a rate far faster than most other states while at the same time the economy is experiencing continued closings and downsizing in small and large businesses throughout the state. Unemployment has dropped to the lowest rate in several years. In the midst of this good news the stories of lay-offs continue even in the fast growing King County area. Elsewhere, job losses continue to be reflected in the employment statistics, especially in the service industries, retail trades, food processing, lumber and wood products, and federal employment.

This report, prepared by the SBCTC, is the fifth review of the accomplishments of the Worker Retraining program of Washington's 32 two-year colleges. It provides detailed information about the colleges' performance.

Workers Served: In the five years of the program, 33,387 unemployed workers were served at Washington's community and technical colleges. In 1997-98, dislocated workers account for 70 percent of the 6,686 annual FTE in the Worker Retraining program. Some 30 percent of the FTE provide a service to other unemployed workers. About half of the dislocated workers had been employed at their former job on a long-term basis, that is for at least a year and a half. Dislocated workers are those who, as a result of the changing economy, had little chance of returning to their former career.

The workers in the program were mostly white males (54 percent male and 76 percent white) about 10 years older than the typical student (median age of 38). Those served are a fairly well-educated population; half had been to college before and just eight percent had not completed high school.

Table 1
Workers Enrolled First 5 Years of Worker Retraining

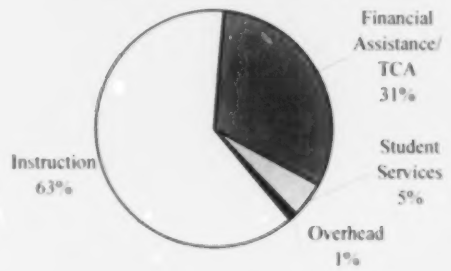
Characteristic	% of 33,387 Workers
Female	46%
Male	54%
African American	5%
Asian/Pacific Islander	7%
Hispanic	6%
Native American	2%
White	79%
Less than High School	8%
GED or High School Diploma	42%
Some College	42%
BA Degree or Higher	9%
Under 30	21%
30-39	33%
40-49	30%
50+	15%
Median Age	38

Enrollments by college are provided in Appendix A, Table A-1. Appendix B provides data on private career school enrollments.

How Funds are Used: In 1997-98 colleges and private career schools spent $26.1 million in the Worker Retraining program.

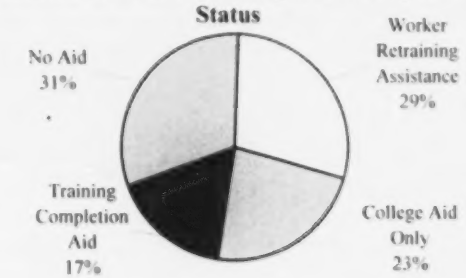
At the colleges, 60 percent of the Worker Retraining funds are used for direct instruction to start new vocational programs or expand existing programs in high demand fields ($15.2 million). Business and labor representatives on local advisory committees helped colleges to assess job demand and complete training program proposals. A state advisory committee made recommendations to the SBCTC regarding which proposals should be funded. That advisory committee consisted of business, labor, government and education representatives. This involvement has helped assure that the new programs best meet the local labor market demands.

% of 1997-98 Expenditures by Area



Some 31 percent of worker retraining funds ($8.1 million) were used to provide direct aid to workers who could not otherwise afford training. All together, nearly half the workers enrolled (46 percent) received aid funded by the program. In addition, 23 percent received the regular financial aid available to all college students but no aid from the program.

1997-98 Worker Retraining Students by Aid Status

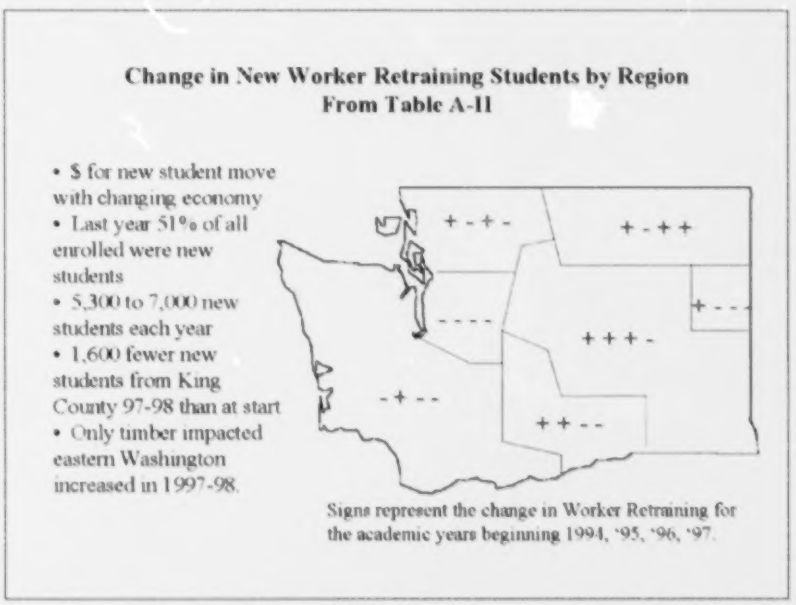


During the last year, 5,341 students received worker retraining program assistance with tuition, books, childcare or transportation directly related to taking classes or for living expenses not covered by other sources (such as UI benefits or JTPA funding). Of those students, 1,985 received Training Completion Aid. This aid helps workers to complete their program when their unemployment insurance dollars end. Others received aid only for tuition, books, transportation and childcare. The typical aided student received $1,516 in assistance from the worker retraining program.

The Changing Face of Dislocation: When the Worker Retraining program was established the manufacturing sector was undergoing considerable change resulting in dislocation of workers in the aerospace and timber and wood products industries. Since that time the industries hit by dislocation have changed dramatically. The timber and wood products sector continues as a major source of job loss for Washington workers – representing 12 percent of all the students starting the program in 1997-98. But other manufacturing is no longer the primary source of dislocation, representing just 16 percent of all new students in 1997-98. This past year, 24 percent of the new students came from the service sector and 17 percent from retail trade (see graph on the next page).

Another sign of shifting dislocations is in the demographic background of the students. When the program began in 1993-94, 66 percent of the students were males and 85 percent white. Today new students in the program are equally likely to be female and 24 percent are students of color with 9 percent Hispanic students. When the program began, the typical student came from a fairly high wage job, making more than $13 an hour. The new students this year, though they are similar in age to those in the first year of the program, made $2 an hour less at their old jobs.

Enrollments Following Shifting Needs: When this program began, 60 percent of the enrollment was in King, Pierce and Snohomish counties due to the large workforce in that area and to the job losses due to the downturn in aircraft manufacturing. Due to the large employment base in the Puget Sound area, 50 percent of all new students are still from that area, but that number now represents 1,600 fewer new students than when the program began. While the number of new Worker Retraining students has declined every year in the Puget Sound region, the numbers have grown in timber impacted eastern Washington colleges. The number of new students has shown an up and down pattern elsewhere in the state, as shown in Appendix A, Table A-II.


Change in New Worker Retraining Students by Region
From Table A-II
• $ for new student move with changing economy
• Last year 51% of all enrolled were new students
• 5,300 to 7,000 new students each year
• 1,600 fewer new students from King County 97-98 than at start
• Only timber impacted eastern Washington increased in 1997-98.
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Signs represent the change in Worker Retraining for the academic years beginning 1994, '95, '96, '97.

Outlook for Worker Retraining: Despite healthy economic growth, at least in the near term, shifts in the mix of industries including declines in some industries and technological changes coupled with firm and industry restructuring will result in a continuing demand for retraining. The state's *Long-term Forecast of Washington Wage and Salary Employment* (OFM, November 1998) predicts an annual average growth in Washington employment to the end of 1999 at a high rate of 2.9 percent a year. During the early part of the next decade, the forecast calls for a slowing of the employment growth rate to 1.5 percent a year.

Despite overall growth, economists predicted that three industry areas will continue a long-trend of employing fewer workers on a year to year basis:

- Lumber and wood products
- Paper and allied products
- Federal government

In 1995, 70,100 worked for the federal government. The OFM forecasts a decline of more than 4,000 workers by the year 2000 with no growth projected thereafter. The forecast assumes that defense related cut-backs will more than compensate for growth that is likely in the postal and park services.

Between now and the year 2000, the lumber and wood products industry is forecasted to lose 300 workers of the 1995 total of 35,400 workers. A slow decline in the size of the workforce is expected to the year 2020. A similar pattern applies in the paper and allied products sector where 700 jobs are forecasted to be lost out of the 1995 total of 17,300 workers.

Economists also foresee that some workers in the growing wholesale trade, transportation and utilities sectors are likely to lose jobs due to technological changes and restructuring.
To return to work, dislocated workers from these industries will need training to update their technical skills.

OUTCOMES

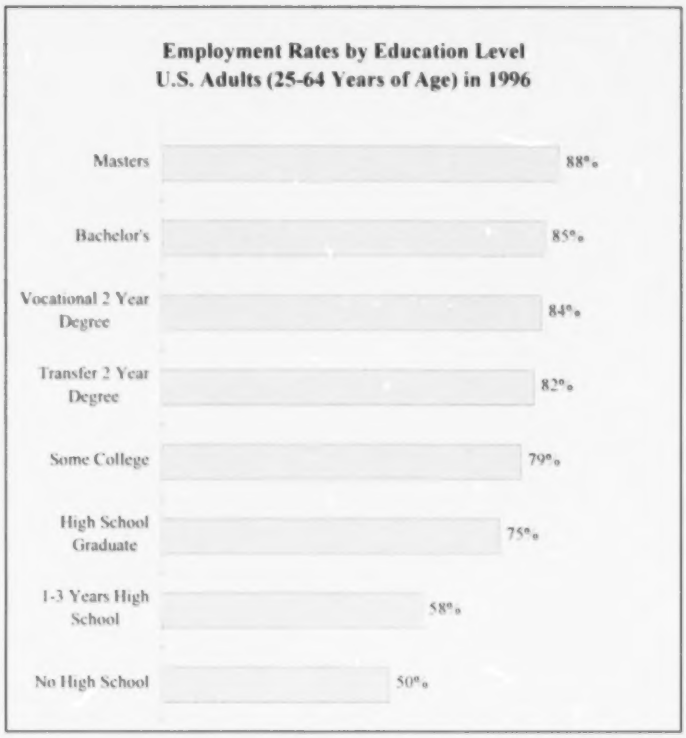
Outcomes data are provided on those students who have completed training and those who left before completing who have been out of college long enough to identify outcomes. As of fall 1997, some 21,249 students have been out of college long enough to observe their post-training status. For the 1996-97 group, 7,722 students have been out of college long enough to observe outcomes.

Wages and Employment: Students continue to be employed at high rates and to gain wages close to their former employment. One measure of the training quality is the rate of pay these students can command as they leave training. The typical worker retraining student who graduated last year or left college without completing training earned $10.83 per hour. That rate was fairly similar to last year even though the incoming wages of last year's group were higher than the 1996-97 group. Last year, 40 percent of the students had earned $15 an hour or more before losing their job while this year just 30 percent had earned at that high wage level. Post-program wages are impacted in part by the pre-job loss earnings.

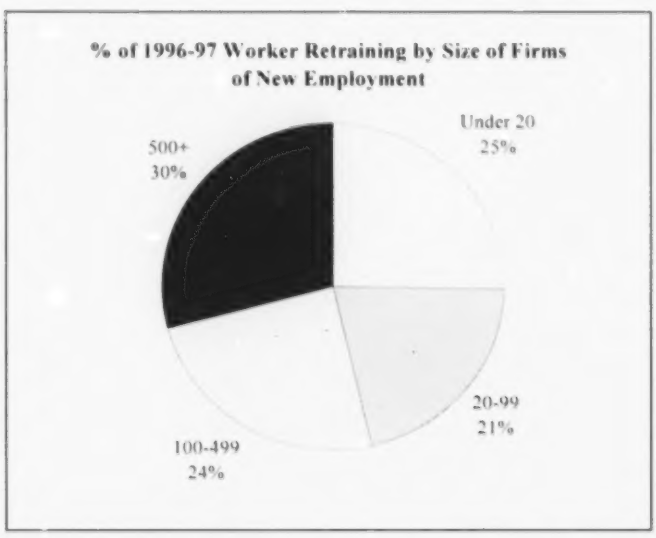
Table II
Employment and Wages of Program Participants
Seven to Nine Months after Training

	93-94	94-95	95-96	96-97
Number of Students Leaving Program	2,763	4,504	6,260	7,722
Number Employed	2,293	3,603	5,180	6,363
Percentage Employed	83%	80%	83%	83%
Median Wage per Hour (in 98 dollars)	$10.02	$10.32	$11.03	$10.83
Median Wage Compared to Pre-Job Less Wage (Wage Recovery Rate)	88%	87%	92%	96%

The placement rates of students are very similar to the rates of adults with the same education levels. As the graph indicates, adults[1] with less than an associate degree but with some college are employed at a 79 percent rate nationally. Those with vocational degrees have a 84 percent placement rate. Adults who are not employed include those at school or managing a home or are unemployed.



Firm Size and Industry Sector: About 46 percent of former students gained employment in firms employing 100 or fewer workers. That is comparable to 45 percent in smaller firms last year in 1997. Some 2,056 of the state's smaller firms have benefited from the Worker Retraining program by employing former students, up from 1,584 the year before. Most students going to work for smaller firms (64 percent) reported that their training was related to their new job. At the same time, 955 larger firms hired former students from the 1996-97 group.



[1] The data for this analysis are based on the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey. Similar data for Washington are not available, however, the Office of Financial Management has been authorized to conduct a survey in 1998 which will provide similar data for this state.

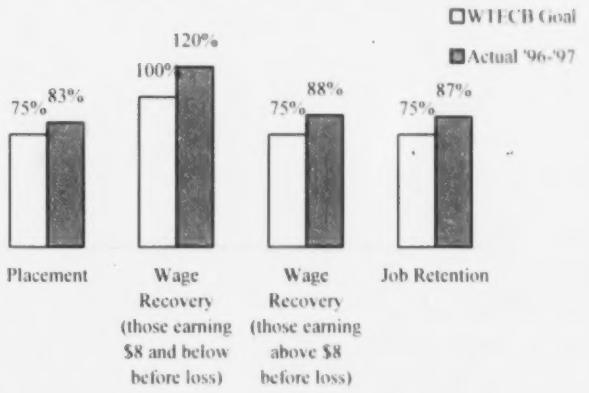
Workers in smaller firms were more likely than those in larger firms to be in the construction, wholesale trade sectors and in the business, social and health service sector. Firms in that sector include: hospitals and doctor's offices, schools, engineering firms, accounting offices, researchers, public information firms, accounting offices, and legal offices. Workers in larger firms were more likely to be in manufacturing jobs and in the temporary worker pool or the software industry (computer services industry). For example, while 13 percent of those who worked in smaller firms worked in the manufacturing sector, 33 percent of those in the larger firms worked in that industry sector.

Job Retention: Class of 1995-96 Worker Retraining students had a high rate of job retention in the full year after training. Some 87 percent of that group were still employed in Washington state a year after the first employment rates were calculated. That is up from the 78 percent rate for the class of 1994-95. Additionally, some 548 of those who were not working in Washington state under covered employment in the first six to nine months after the program had gained such employment a year later.

Those not found in "covered" employment in Washington state may have moved to another state, become self-employed, worked for the federal government, left the workforce (retired, homemakers or discouraged workers), or were unemployed at the time of the follow-up. The Workforce Training Education Coordinating Board (WTECB) had set a 75 percent job retention rate and these figures show that the program exceeds that goal.

Summary of Outcomes: When this program began, the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WETCB) established goals for the outcomes of this program. The 1996-97 group exceeded those outcome goals as have those who left the program from earlier years.

Employment and Earnings Summary

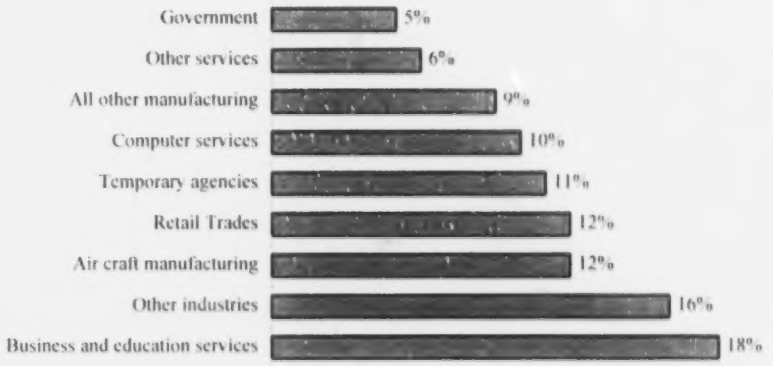


New and Expanded Programs: Colleges gather much of the data on employment demand and wage rates from the Employment Security Department's customized labor market reports. The local advisory committee for each college's Worker Retraining program helps the college to assess the best options for using their Worker Retraining dollars. These advisory committees include representatives of more than 250 labor groups and businesses. The college, with the assistance of their advisory committee, develops an annual plan in which they justify the employment demand for all funded programs. This year to year scrutiny assures that programs are responsive to local needs, especially needs in the fast growing industries.

The Worker Retraining dollars have allowed colleges the opportunity to start programs and to expand successful programs beyond the extent possible given their other financial resources. A key measure of whether this effort is working is growth in the output of students in high demand areas. The information technology field provides an excellent example. At the end of the first year of the Worker Retraining program, 145 students left for the job market with information technology skills. In 1995-96 the number had grown to 666 in this high demand field and this past year there were 745 entering the labor force from information technology programs. The information technology program is the fastest growing field for worker retraining students. The funding for the Worker Retraining program has provided the new dollars to hire new faculty and add equipment for this program. This has had some benefits for other students as well, as their numbers have also grown, though not at the same rate as for Worker Retraining students.

The typical student from this year's information technology classes gained employment at $12.03 an hour. Some 28 percent worked in business, education services and computer services. Other students are working in a wide variety of industries because information technology is a part of most industries today.

Industries Where Information Technology Students Work



SUMMARY

This fifth accountability report provides evidence that community and technical college training for unemployed and dislocated workers is **relevant** to the training needs of the State of Washington and to the workers in the program and that the program is **responsive** to the changing economy both in terms of where the training is offered and in providing new training programs.

Most of the workers served had a long tenure with a firm that either had closed its doors or had downsized. Job loss of this type typically has negative impact on future earnings. The idea of the Worker Retraining program is to mitigate, to some extent, this negative impact of job loss by providing the opportunity for workers to learn the skills needed to compete for better paying jobs.

Results from the five SBCTC accountability studies show that retraining does pay off for most workers. This past year, 83 percent became employed within seven to nine months after leaving training. Workers obtain jobs that provide them with 92 percent of their inflation adjusted hourly earnings before their job loss. Not only do students obtain jobs at high wages but they also keep them. The retention rate was 87 percent compared to the WTECB goal of 75 percent retention.

In addition to funding the pay for instructors and for program equipment and supplies, the Worker Retraining program offers Training Completion Aid that provides living expenses for workers in training after their unemployment insurance ends to about 17 percent of those enrolled. Another 29 percent received assistance with tuition, childcare or transportation costs.

Although the state's overall economy is healthier today than when the Worker Retraining program began, the need to serve dislocated workers continues. The industry decline and industry change trends signal that even in a strong economy the demand for retraining continues.

The Worker Retraining program is one of the most intensely studied state implemented programs. Much of the earlier research on the impact of the program and on employer and student satisfaction has been summarized in the earlier yearly accountability reports. The SBCTC makes these reports available electronically at http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu. As a result of these analyses, the college system has continually improved the quality of the Worker Retraining Program.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The accountability efforts of the SBCTC are being conducted with the help of many SBCTC staff members. Dan McConnon, Director of Workforce Education, is the staff lead for the Worker Retraining program and has played an important role in the data gathering and analysis for the accountability report as well. The lead staff member for the accountability report is Loretta Seppanen, Senior Research Manager. Tracy Wheeler and Deralyn Gjertson have maintained the Worker Retraining database and managed the many data match processes required. Pat Ward collected data from the proprietary schools. Lorna Sutton, Bob Randolph, and Vallie Jo Fry, contributed to the accountability report. Michael Scroggins and Sean Funk kept the computers running so that all these data could be used for the study.

Employment Security Department (ESD) staff provided data and expertise related to the unemployed workers in Washington and wage and employment histories of the Worker Retraining students.

Dave Pavelchek of the WTECB provided the leadership and expertise to make these ESD data available in a format that assures comparability with other training programs.

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APPENDIX A

Data Sources, Glossary and Detailed Tables

Data Sources

The accountability analysis is based on data drawn from a number of different sources. Most important sources in this analysis are:

SBCTC Worker Retraining Database: Based on individual student enrollment records, this database provides considerable background information on the 27,401 students who enrolled under the terms of the Worker Retraining program. This file also includes data from the Unemployment Insurance system on pre-job loss employment and employment after leaving the colleges.

The Workforce Training Trust Fund Student Survey, Spring/Summer 1994: This survey provided additional background information and student perceptions related to training and service delivery. The 1,347 Worker Retraining students who started a job training curriculum in winter 1994 were the population of this survey. Of these students, some 953 provided useable responses to the mail survey (71 percent response rate). Respondents matched the population well except for low response from Hispanics (3 percent of respondents versus 4 percent in population), African Americans (6 percent respondents compared with 7 percent in population), and from the subset of students who left between the winter and spring quarter (17 percent respondents versus 23 percent in population). Given the high response rate and relative similarity of respondents and the population, the survey results are judged to be highly representative of the students who are new to the college and in job training programs under Worker Retraining. Details on this survey are included in the first annual report published in December 1994.

The Survey of Former Students Who Participated in the Workforce Training Trust Fund Program: Some 879 respondents to the first survey who have left the college were surveyed again about three months after they left college. Of these, 498 responded for a 57 percent response rate. Appendix B of the third year report published in December 1996 provides more detail on the survey process and response rates.

Financial Management System and Information Request: SBCTC staff used the statewide SBCTC Financial Management System to report and monitor expenditures under the program.

Glossary

Student FTE: One annual FTE is the equivalent of one student enrolled for 45 credit hours in a year.

Headcount: Count of each student just once for the year or biennium regardless of how many times that student may re-enroll.

Dislocated worker: Workers laid off from declining industries or declining occupations or in timber impacted counties. About a quarter of all unemployed workers are coded as dislocated. For the purpose of this analysis, a computer protocol developed by the Labor Market and Economic Analysis Branch of the state Employment Security Department was used to identify these students. For programs such as the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), Trade Re-adjustment Act (TRA), and Timber Retraining Benefits program (TRB), additional data are used to determine eligibility as a dislocated worker.

High wage programs: SBCTC divides programs into two groups based on the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code of the course. The CIP code is a standard coding system used nationwide for all levels of education. Community and technical colleges assign a code to each program based on the subject matter covered. The SBCTC regards a program as high wage if the typical graduate earns $11 an hour or higher. The following programs are high wage programs for workers being retrained:

Aircraft Mechanics
Auto/Diesel Technicians
Construction Trades
Equipment Operators
Equipment Repair
Graphic Arts
Health Occupations
Information Technologies
Legal Assistant
Machinist
Science Technologies
Welding

Lower Wage Program: Worker Retraining students in these programs typically earned less than $9 an hour.

Retail Sales
Secretarial, Clerical
Library Assistant
Teaching Assistant
Early Childhood Education
Commercial Food Service
Cosmetology
Hospitality
Horticulture
Marketing

Table A-1
Worker Retraining FTEs by College

	1st Year 1993-94	5th Year 1997-98
Bates	142	317
Bellevue	79	245
Bellingham	38	105
Big Bend	17	60
Centralia	79	168
Clark	94	256
Clover Park	288	389
Columbia Basin	9	225
Edmonds	182	219
Everett	182	139
Grays Harbor	296	421
Green River	218	232
Highline	80	210
Lake Washington	76	107
Lower Columbia	71	42
Olympic	113	212
Peninsula	45	412
Pierce	111	165
Renton	212	264
Seattle Central	210	243
Seattle North	130	177
Seattle South	120	219
Seattle Voc Institute	20	45
Shoreline	99	193
Skagit Valley	94	174
South Puget Sound	114	213
Spokane	182	158
Spokane Falls	57	159
Tacoma	88	227
Walla Walla	56	298
Wenatchee Valley	30	135
Whatcom	38	56
Yakima Valley	148	202
SYSTEM TOTAL	3,718	6,687

Source: SBCTC Data Warehouse, Student Table for Worker Retraining (work attend = 80-82).

Table A-II
New Worker Retraining Students by Region

	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
Agricultural Eastern Washington	196	229	266	396	282
% Change		16.8%	16.2%	48.9%	-28.8%
Central Washington	273	536	609	509	443
% Change		96.3%	13.6%	-16.4%	-13.0%
Timber Impacted Eastern Washington	71	84	78	87	111
% Change		18.3%	-7.1%	11.5%	27.6%
Clark	157	78	250	250	93
% Change		-50.3%	220.5%	0.0%	-62.8%
Puget Sound	4,308	4,052	3,558	3,282	2,631
% Change		-5.9%	-12.2%	-7.8%	-19.8%
Southwest Washington	610	542	617	607	435
% Change		-11.1%	13.8%	-1.6%	-28.3%
Spokane	390	580	396	347	331
% Change		48.7%	-31.7%	-12.4%	-4.6%
Timber Impacted Western Washington	751	490	853	689	647
% Change		-34.8%	74.1%	-19.2%	-6.1%
Northwest Washington	313	323	253	297	239
% Change		3.2%	-21.7%	17.4%	-19.5%
Out of State, unknown	22	27	11	14	68
% Change		22.7%	-59.3%	27.3%	385.7%
System Total New	7,091	6,941	6,891	6,478	5,280
% Change		-2.1%	-0.7%	-6.0%	-18.5%

APPENDIX B

Private Career School Students

Enrollments: In addition to those enrolled at the colleges, some 1,012 individuals have been served with Worker Retraining funding at 35 private career schools. Private schools receive funds to serve students after the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB) approves of a proposal from the schools. Schools must indicate that an eligible worker has elected to enroll and that training of the same type would not be available at a nearby community or technical college.

Private Career School Students by Program
1994 through 1998

Program of Study	Number of Students
Administrative Support	400
Massage Therapy	205
Medical Assisting	116
Cosmetology	67
Pharmacy Assisting	33
Information Tech	31
Marketing and Sales	26
Other Technical	23
Dental Assisting	17
Protective Services	14
Precision, Production, Crafts	9
Construction Trades	6
Legal Assistant	4
Drafting	3
Telecom, Media	3
Accounting	2
Computer maintenance Tech	2
Education/ Social Services	2
Industrial Tech (except electronics tech)	2
Machinist	2
Building and Grounds Maintenance	1
Electrical Equipment Repair	1
Electronics Tech	1
Managerial and Managerial Support	1
Medical Xray	1
Other Health Tech	1

The Washington State Board
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For more information on the training offered under
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For more information on the accountability research
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